RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 24th August, 2004/2 *Bhadrapada, 1926 (Saka)*

The House met at Eleven of the clock

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Hike in security deposit for new LPG connections

*401. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the public sector oil companies such as Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum have stopped issuing new LPG connections;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the oil companies have demanded a security deposit hike of Rs. 250/- for each new connection after the cost of steel went up from Rs. 17000 per ton to Rs. 28000 per ton;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) AStatement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The release of new connections by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) has been affected by shortage of cylinders due to cylinder manufacturers not honouring their commitment on supplies because of continuous increase in steel prices. This has resulted in some build-up of waiting lists of new customers. Government have, therefore, directed OMCs to liquidate by mid-September the waiting list of LPG customers as on 1.8.2004.

(c) to (e) OMCs have approached the Government for an increase in security deposit for LPG cylinders due to hike in procurement cost of cylinders following increase in steel prices. The matter is under consideration of the Government.

श्री दत्ता मेघे :सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री महोदय से कहना चाहता हूं कि गैस कनैक्शन की वेटिंग लिस्ट बढ़नी शुरू हो गई है ।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : यह रिकार्ड नही हो रहा है । यह रिकार्ड नही होगा । ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री दत्ता मेघे : गैस अभी नही मिल रही है । ...(व्यवधान)... सैक्योरिटी डिपाजिट में 2,295 बढ़ाने की मांग की है । ...(व्यवधान)... मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्या वे वेटिगं लिस्ट खत्म होने के बाद सैक्योरिटी डिपाजिट बढ़ाने के प्रस्ताव पर विचार करेंगें? ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a request made to the Ministry by the oil marketing companies for an increase in the security deposit. *(Interruptions)...* But that request came to us prior to the revision in customs duties and excise duties, which has affected the steel prices. *(Interruptions)...* Therefore, the basis on which the application came to *us...(Interruptions)...* Nevertheless, there are issues, which are serious....There are tenders which are already floated. *(Interruptions)...* We are in the process of tendering them...(*Interruptions)...*Once we have seen what the prices being offered are—we will get this information by 11th September—we will then take a decision. *(Interruptions)...* For the moment, since this issue has been raised, we are not going to change the current security deposit on the cylinder. *(Interruptions)...*

श्री दत्ता मेघे : सभापति महोदय ...(व्यवधान)... सैक्योरिटी डिपाजिट आपके पास नौ हजार करोड़ रुपये है और ...(व्यवधान)... और डिपाजिट बढाएं उसका हर साल ...(व्यवधान)... डिपाजिट नहीं बढाने की जो स्कीम है, जिसके लिए आप सोच रहे है ...(व्यवधान)... डिपाजिट बढेंगे। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, as far as LPG is concerned, the Government, every year, has been very, very slightly, moderately, increasing the prices. *(Interruptions)...* On 15th June, it was decided to increase the price of LPG by Rs. 20 only a cylinder. *(Interruptions)...*

At that stage the market would have demanded an increase of Rs. 123 in Delhi. *(Interruptions)...* In these circumstances, when oil prices went even higher up *(Interruptions)...* it was then decided we would not increase the price of LPG cylinder. *(Interruptions)...* There are substantial deposits available with our oil marketing companies on account of *(Interruptions)...* I think the hon. Member would also want a fantastic increase in the number of *...(Interruptions)...* Mr. Chairman, Sir, LPG is highly subsidised. *(Interruptions)...* A substantial portion of the subsidy is being borne by the oil companies. *(Interruptions)...* It is wrong to suggest that there is *...(Interruptions)...* in this regard. On the contrary, we are looking after the consumer interest. *(Interruptions)...*

Roof top water harvesting programmes

*402. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether roof top water harvesting programmes have been introduced in Rajasthan and Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the status of implementation of the project, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), a sub-ordinate office under the administrative control of the Ministry of Water Resources, has introduced roof top water harvesting programmes in the country, including Rajasthan and Punjab, under its Central Sector Scheme as demonstrative projects during VIII and IX Plans. The details of projects